

White: M-2

July 17, 1946
Hartsville, Tennessee

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt;

Since your husband's death the men who were his bitter enemies have done nothing but attempt to slander his name and persecute his family. The unfortunate part is that most of the people (and certainly that is the majority of the American people) who loved him and revere his memory are little people. We have no voice - we have nothing but deep devotion and loyalty that can never be erased.

Please do not think me presumptuous. I am not intending to lie. But it seems to me that to tell you how some of us feel can in a small way compensate for the unfair advantage a few people are trying to take toward a man who can no longer defend himself. The strange thing these men can not seem to understand is that the American people loved Roosevelt - they just loved him - that's all. They talked about him, told him about him, did everything they could against for twelve long years. Then Roosevelt's warm commanding voice - at times like a lullaby - at times like a bugle's battle cry, would come in the air - that's all brothers. We knew he would tell us right, we knew we could always depend on him so we elected ^{him} four times and again, again and again.

These lines are not much but they were written

the deep humility toward greatness and they are
what many, many people feel. I hope that you
will find a little comfort from them.

Sincerely,
Sara White

Mrs. Eugene White
1406 Eastland Ave
Washburn 6, Tennessee

I BELIEVE THAT A LONG TIME AGO THE ALMIGHTY IN HIS INFINITE GOODNESS LOOKED DOWN ON THIS NATION AND HE SAW THAT AMERICA WAS GOING TO NEED A MAN TO DO A MAN'S JOB. HE SAID, "NOW LETS LOOK AROUND AND SEE WHO IS AVAILABLE." HE LOOKED DEEP INTO THE HEARTS OF MEN AND IN ONE HE FOUND THE SEED OF GREATNESS. NOW THE ALMIGHTY KNOWS (AS HIS BOOK PROVES) THAT NO MAN CAN BE TRULY GREAT UNLESS HE HAS SUFFERED. THIS MAN HADN'T SUFFERED. HE HAD NEVER KNOWN FINANCIAL STRESS--HE WAS BORN IN LUXURY. HE HAD NEVER KNOWN PHYSICAL DISABILITY--HE WAS STRONG AND VIGOROUS AND HE HAD NEVER KNOWN WHAT IT MEANT TO BE HUMBLE AND NAMELESS--HE WAS LINKED BY FAMILY TO TEN PRESIDENTS. THE ALMIGHTY SAID, "NOW LETS LET HIM SUFFER AND SEE WHAT WILL HAPPEN." THE SQUIRE OF HYDE PARK WAS STRICKEN WITH INFANTILE PARALYSIS AND THE GREATEST PHYSICAL HANDICAP OF PUBLIC OFFICE IN THE HISTORY OF THIS COUNTRY BECAME A TRIUMPHANT MARCH OF DESTINY. ROOSEVELT LEARNED WHAT IT MEANT TO READ FROM A CRUMPLED, MUD-SPATTERED MANUSCRIPT. FOR FREQUENTLY BEFORE SOME OF HIS GREATEST ADDRESSES THE BRACES THAT HELD HIS LEGS WOULD GIVE BE- NEATH HIS WEIGHT AND HE WOULD FALL CLUTCHING AND SCATTERING THE NOTES HE HELD IN HIS HAND. IT'S PRETTY DREADFUL TO FALL--BUT IT MUST BE HORRIBLE TO FALL AND NOT TO BE ABLE TO GET UP ON YOUR OWN FEET UNDER YOUR OWN POWER. ROOSEVELT LEARNED WHAT IT MEANT TO READ FROM A CRUMPLED, MUD-SPATTERED MANUSCRIPT. AND THE SEED OF GREATNESS IN HIS BEART GREW TO BE BOUNDLESS.

ALWAYS I AM REMINDED WHEN I SEE HEADLINES LINKE, "IF ROOSEVELT HAD LIVED SO AND SO WOULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED." BUT WE KNOW SOME OF THESE THINGS WOULD HAVE HAPPENED. WE KNOW THAT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED, SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY, ARE TO WIDE FOR THERE TO BE ANY REAL UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THEM. BUT WE KNOW THAT IF HE HAD LIVED THOSE DIFFERENCES WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SO NUMEROUS AND THE ONES THAT DID EXIST WOULD HAVE BEEN HANDLED WITH MARVELOUS FINESSE. ALWAYS I AM REMINDED, "MILTON, THOU SHOULDEST BE LIVING AT THIS HOUR, ENGLAND HATH NEED OF THEE." "ROOSEVELT, THOU SHOULDEST BE LIVING AT THIS HOUR-- AMERICA AND THE WORLD HATH NEED OF THEE."

IF I SHOULD BE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO ENTER HEAVEN AND I SHOULD BE OFFERED A CROWN AND SOME STARS. I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT A CROWN AND STARS, THEY DON'T MEAN MUCH TO ME. I THINK I'D SAY, "IF YOU PLEASE, SAVE THOSE THINGS FOR SOMEBODY BIG AND IMPORTANT AND IN THEIR PLACE, IF YOU PLEASE, IN THEIR PLACE LET ME HAVE A LOOK, UP REAL CLOSE, AT PRESIVELT. LET ME SEE THE THIN SPOTS THAT TIME AND EFFORT PLACED IN HIS HAIR. LET ME SEE THE LINES THAT PAIN AND SUFFERING ETCHED DEEP INTO HIS FACE. AND LET ME SEE THE CLEAR BLUE OF HIS EYES AND FIND MIRROWED THERE HIS COURAGE AND HIS INDOMITABLE FAITH IN THE AMERICAN PEOPLE--HIS FAITH IN THE AMERICAN PEOPLE." THE LITTLE GUY, THE AVERAGE FELLOW, WE ARE THE ONES WHO LOVED HIM BEST. THOSE OF US WHO WILL NEVER BE BIG AND WE'LL NEVER ACCOMPLISH BIG THINGS. WE 'LL JUST DO THE DAILY TASK AS IT COMES AND DO IT THE BEST WE CAN. WE ARE THE ONES WHO KNEW THE MAN WITH THE OLD HAT, THE DOG, AND THE FISHING POLES. WE KNEW PRESIVELT HAD A BIG CHEST--HE HAD TO, TO HOLD SUCH A GREAT BIG HEART.

I BELIEVE THAT THE ALMIGHTY IN HIS INFINITE WISDOM LOOKED DOWN AGAIN ON THIS NATION. HE SAW THAT PRESIVELT WAS WORN AND TIRED, TOO EXHAUSTED FOR HUMAN STRENGTH. HE SAID, "BOY, YOU SURE DID A SWELL JOB, A POWERFUL SWELL JOB." HE STOOPED AND GATHERED ROOSEVELT IN HIM ARMS AND CARRIED HIM UP THERE TO MEET THE ELITE OF THE AGES--MOSES, PETER, FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE(SHE, LIKE FDR), MADAME CURIE, IT MUST HAVE BEEN A GLORIOUS CELEBRATION. I BELIEVE ROOSEVELT GREETED THEM AS SO OFTEN HE GREETED THE PEOPLE OF THIS NATION, "MY FRIENDS, IT HAS BEEN A LONG ARDUOUS JOURNEY AND IT IS GOOD TO BE HOME."